



President's Message

Leonard Howard MD

What is this Consortium that we keep hearing about?

We have something new in the political scene in Hawaii. The physicians have finally realized that it is necessary to present a unified front to outsiders, be they legislators, health insurance companies or federal agencies. Thus was born the Consortium, which is an association of five physician organizations including, in alphabetical order, Hawaii Coalition for Health, Hawaii Federation of Physicians and Dentists, Hawaii Medical Association, Pacific Medical Administrative Group, and Queen's Medical Group.

The Consortium was formed during the discussions with HMSA, and presented a unified front in the continuing meetings, first with the Insurance Commissioner, then with the leadership of HMSA. With the aid of lawyer members of the Coalition, the HMSA Provider Agreement was carefully examined for its effect on the practice of medicine, and the ability of physicians to make the decisions as to how their patients are to be treated. A position paper was developed which was the basis for continuing discussions, both public and private, which ultimately led to creation of an agreement that was at least acceptable to the Consortium. It did not answer all the problems, but was the basis for a two-year trial period to see how it would work in practice.

When Queen's Hospital put out a Participating Provider Agreement for their new Worker's Comp and No-Fault Provider Group, many of the problem areas identified in the HMSA contract were also identified. When these were brought to the attention of Queen's Hospital by the Consortium, they immediately accepted all the changes that had been made by HMSA in the previous discussions. There was no need for the prolonged discussions and media debates that went on with the original efforts. At this point in time, St. Francis has put forth another Provider Agreement, containing many of the same problems. The Consortium has offered their assistance to St. Francis' administration in order to bring their agreement into a form that will be acceptable to the physicians.

In the legislative arena, the Coalition, Federation and the HMA are working in a coordinated fashion to represent the physicians of Hawaii in legislative matters. It has evoked comments from the legislators that "the physicians are finally speaking with one voice" which is much more effective. The Consortium concept allows each organization to maintain their own philosophic standards, while coming together as a unified whole when the action is acceptable to all members. The HMA will continue to hold our traditional values while at the same time working for the common good. I don't think anyone has any idea that managed care is going away. Our job now is to ensure that managed care is quality care. The only way we do this is by working together for our patients. If we don't we will sink together by ourselves. In Unity there is Strength!

High Cost of Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke in 1998

American Heart Association
Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke

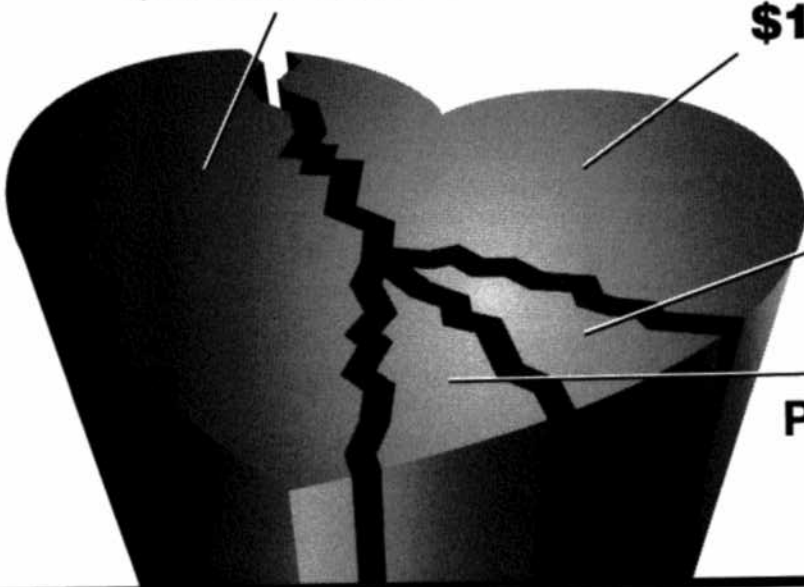


**Lost Work Productivity
\$103.1 Billion**

**Hospital/Nursing
Home Services
\$119.9 Billion**

**Drugs/Home
Health Care/Other
\$25.2 Billion**

**Physician/Other
Professional Services
\$25.9 Billion**



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